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Realtor Foundation Awareness Week examines local homelessness

By Erin K. Witt
For Custom Publications

Beginning June 18, Realtors from 10 central Indiana counties will take a closer look at the region's homelessness problem and what's being done to resolve it.

The first annual Realtor Foundation Awareness Week will highlight the goals and accomplishments of the Realtor Foundation — the philanthropic arm of the Metropolitan Indianapolis Board of Realtors — and explore new ways Realtors can help combat homelessness locally.

About 3,500 people are homeless in Indianapolis every night. The circumstances that lead to homelessness often are preventable; many homeless people cite eviction or inability to pay rent as leading causes.

In response, the Realtor Foundation awards grants to support central Indiana organizations working to provide transitional housing solutions, defined as the step between emergency shelter and permanent homeownership.

"This observance is just another chance for us to raise awareness of the small ways we can all help address a big problem in central Indiana," said Mark Dudley, Realtor Foundation president. "As Realtors, we want to ensure that our communities are healthy and that we are helping put families [that] need homes into homes. Transitional housing is a step in that direction for many

homeless families, and the Realtor Foundation is proud to play a part in supporting those efforts."

Looking to learn more?

To help all Realtors learn more about the foundation and how they can play a part, special events are planned June 18 through 22. MIBOR members will receive information about the foundation's efforts through their individual brokers and participate in donor recognition and prize-winning opportunities, including a chance to win an all-inclusive VIP

night at Victory Field for 20 guests.

In the past three years, the foundation has given nearly \$250,000 to homelessness service providers in Hancock, Hendricks, Johnson, Marion and Morgan counties. The 2008 grant applications are due in mid-July, followed by grant review in August. Recipients will be named in October.

This year, the foundation has a record-breaking \$80,000 available to distribute. These funds were raised through special events and contributions from area real estate professionals and companies.

What makes the Realtor Foundation a true community partner in the fight against homelessness is not just the funding it offers, but also the hands-on support its members provide, according to Bill Bickel, director of Holy Family Transitional Housing, a 2007 grant recipient.

"There's not a week that goes by without someone from the foundation calling me with a housing referral or [an] offer to volunteer," Bickel said. "They know what the needs are in this part of the community, and they really know how to provide support in every way to organizations working to provide transitional housing."

To learn more about the Realtor Foundation or to download a 2008 grant application, visit www.realtorfoundation.org.



A snapshot of local homelessness

- A large number of homeless people are temporarily homeless because of sudden medical problems or job loss.
- Of the 15,000 homeless people in Marion County, nearly 7,000 are children.
- Over the course of a year, anywhere from 9,000 to 13,000 Indianapolis-area people will experience homelessness.
- Domestic violence is a leading cause of homelessness.
- 40 percent of the homeless are families.
- In Marion County alone, 3,500 people are homeless on any given day.

Source: Coalition for Homeless Intervention and Prevention, 2005 Street Count

Central Indiana housing data

Current active properties 21,034

	April '07	April '06
Units sold:	2,613	2,680
Average sales price:	\$153,308	\$154,547

Date generated: 06/04/07

Includes the counties of Boone, Brown, Decatur, Hamilton, Hancock, Hendricks, Johnson, Madison, Marion, Morgan, Montgomery, Putnam and Shelby.

Source: Metropolitan Indianapolis Board of Realtors.

Mortgage Rates from dozens of area companies **H8**

Have real estate news to share?

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Biophilic design brings the great outdoors inside

Biophilia — a term used to describe humans' innate craving to be close to nature — is spawning a new design trend that's popping up throughout homes, and specifically in kitchens.

"Considering the term wasn't even coined until the mid-1980s by a professor at Harvard, overall, biophilia is a new concept," said Scott Perry of The KitchenWright in Carmel. "The

importance of biophilia is just being recognized by cutting-edge designers and architects. The welcoming of Mother Nature into our kitchens is truly recent."

Granite, soapstone, butcher-block wood, copper, pebble — all of these natural materials are



File Photo

making their way into contemporary kitchens with greater frequency. "We want

the views out of the windows from our kitchen sinks to be one of the best views in the house,"

Perry said. "Visual access to the outdoors is a common request. More windows, more skylights. Cabinetry pulls mimic twigs and flowers. Potted herbs grow on the windowsill. It's organic contemporary. Many of us even change our decor with the seasons."

For more information about biophilic design, call The KitchenWright at (317) 848-1111 or visit www.thekitchenwright.com. ■

A roof overhead

When buying a home, one important thing to consider is the condition of the roof. Even if the roof is watertight at the time of inspection, you still may find it leaking sooner than you expect.

To stay ahead of such situations, check the attic periodically for telltale signs of leakage. Check all roof flashings and areas where the roof is penetrated by a chimney, vent, skylight, dormer or other protrusion.

Leaks often develop around roof penetrations because the flashing that seals the joints or the sealant dries out and cracks. The home inspection experts at HouseMaster suggest periodically applying sealants at roof joints. If you have loose shingles, secure them with roofing nails — but remember, nails shouldn't be left exposed.

— NAPS

